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ABSTRACT

Providing guidance to the administrator, supervisor, or reading consultant who may be called upon to evaluate a school or system-wide reading program, this practical checklist has been so arranged that each item calls for a "yes" answer. The checklist includes most of the effective features of a reading program as related to teachers, pupils, administrative and supervisory personnel, and parents. (RS)

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1.

A Checklist for the Evaluation of Reading Programs (Revised)

ED325842

Sidney J. Rauch, Ed. D.

For many years it has been commonplace for reading authorities to list as one of the basic principles of reading instruction, "There is no one best program or method for teaching reading." The reasons for this statement are based on the findings of research studies and on the observations of experienced classroom teachers and supervisors. Each program must, of necessity, be different, depending on the individual pupil's abilities and needs, the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher's performances, the goals and strategies of administrative and supervisory personnel, the materials available, and the interests and concerns of the community. Decades of research and the evaluation of hundreds of new and different reading programs have presented us with one unescapable conclusion: We have not discovered one particular method or approach that has overcome individual differences or has eliminated reading and learning deficiencies. Any individual or organization that claims otherwise should be highly suspect.

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However, there are certain aspects of a reading program that we can evaluate. If we know what to look for, our task is made much easier. The checklist devised by the writer can give guidance to the administrator, supervisor, or reading consultant who may be called upon to evaluate a school or system-wide program. The checklist has been so arranged that each item calls for a "Yes" answer. We can assume that the greater number of affirmative replies, the better the reading program. No

effort has been made to provide a rating scale (e.g., Excellent - 90-100%; Good - 85-89%; Fair - 75-85%, etc.) because it has been impossible to attach a numerical or quality rating for each item. However, most of the good features of a reading program as related to teachers, pupils, administrative and supervisory personnel, and parents have been included. The items listed should cause administrators and reading supervisors to take a closer look at their own programs and to see how many affirmative replies are included. A significant number of negative replies should be cause for concern, and result in a concentrated drive for improvement.

I. The Reading Program

A. Is the program a developmental one (K-12) where reading improvement for all children is the concern of every teacher?

B. Are the following components of a good reading program being provided for?
   1. Integration of the language arts
   2. A planned literature program
   3. Emphasis on recreational reading
   4. Reading regarded as a holistic process
   5. Word recognition strategies
   6. Comprehension strategies
   7. Study strategies (with emphasis on the content areas)

C. What materials are being used to complement basic instructional texts?
   1. Library books (fiction and non-fiction)
   2. Newspapers, journals, personal diaries
   3. Audio-visual materials (films, video casettes, tape recorders, TV, bulletin boards, etc.)
   4. Computer assisted program

5. Word games; study kits

6. Realia (objects, tools, activities relating classroom experiences to real life)
7. Others

D. Is a love for reading being instilled?
E. Is a major emphasis placed on comprehension?
F. Is reading regarded as a process rather than a subject?
G. Are the following three types of instructional programs being provided for?
   1. Developmental (i.e., basically, the type of program for "able" readers doing grade level reading and above)
   2. Corrective (i.e.,basically, the type of program for those pupils who are slightly below grade level and whose instructional needs can be met in the regular classroom)
   3. Remedial (i.e., basically, the type of program for those pupils who are seriously below grade level, and who require specialized instruction in an individual or small-group situation)
H. Is the program being continually evaluated?

Comments

II. The Administrative and Supervisory Staff

A. Are school leaders knowledgeable about the reading process?

B. Do they make a serious effort to keep up with the latest developments in the field (i.e., current thinking, technology, materials, etc.)?

C. Do they provide an atmosphere conducive to learning?

D. Do they listen to teachers?

E. Is creativity on the part of teachers encouraged?

F. Do they recognize the positive contributions of teachers?

G. Do they encourage teachers to continue their professional development?

H. Do they support educational experimentation and innovation?

I. Are teachers consulted or advised before new programs are instituted, or changes made?

J. Is time provided for teacher exchange of ideas and intervisitations?

K. Is the work of the reading supervisor, reading teacher or specialist fully supported?

L. Are the necessary basic instructional materials supplied?

M. Are the supplementary or enrichment materials supplied?

Comments

III. The Teaching Staff

A. Are they experienced?
B. Are they receptive to change?
C. Are they aware of the emphasis on "whole language?"
D. Are they receptive to offers of professional help?
E. Are efforts being made to improve their instruction?
    1. Inservice programs
    2. Individual conferences
    3. Graduate reading courses
    4. Recommended readings
    5. Demonstrations
    6. Intervisitations
    7. Attendance at local, state, or national conferences
F. Are efforts made to individualize instruction?
G. Are they flexible in their grouping procedures?
H. Does the teacher consider the basal reader as a tool for teaching reading skills, rather than as a complete reading program?
I. Is the library an important part of the reading program?
J. Are teacher-aides and/or clerical assistance available?
K. Do teachers take advantage of community resources to enrich their teaching?
L. Do teachers take an active role in evaluation of the reading program?

Comments

IV. The Pupils

A. Are they reading on their own?
B. Are they encouraged to read critically?
C. Do they have opportunities to combine reading with writing?
D. Is application of reading skills made to the content areas?
E. Do they adjust reading rate to purpose and to the difficulty of the reading selection?
F. Are they encouraged to share their enjoyment of reading with others?
G. What opportunities do they have to report on books?
    1. Oral reports
    2. Written reports
    3. Dramatizations
    4. Group projects
    5. Art work (drawings, puppetry, mobiles, dioramas, etc.)
    6. Others
H. Is their work evaluated by the following?
    1. Teacher observation
    2. Checklists
    3. Interest inventories
    4. Standardized reading tests
    5. Informal reading tests
    6. Anecdotal records
    7. Self-evaluation

Comments

V. The Parents

A. Are they familiar with the school's philosophy of reading?

B. Has the program been adequately explained to them?

C. Are they given an opportunity to participate in various phases of the reading program (e.g. , book fairs, teaching and library aides, volunteer tutors, etc.?)

D. Are they satisfied with the reading program?

E. Are contemplated changes or new programs presented to them?

F. Are parents contributing to readiness for beginning reading?

G. Do they participate in school-sponsored workshops?

H. Are they given opportunities to express their opinions and make recommendations?

I. Do they feel that all pupils are involved in the reading programs?

J. Are they invited to observe programs in action?

K. Do they take advantage of community resources in enriching their children's experiential background?

L. Are the majority of parents readers themselves?

Comments

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